

Business Continuity Programme

“Ocean Drive”

Post Exercise Report



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1 Executive Summary

1.1 Overview and Concept of the Exercise

A scenario exercise was conducted by Glen Abbot on 11th March 2009 for Argyll & Bute Council. Exercise "Ocean Drive" was a three hour exercise involving members of the Council's combined Business Continuity and Incident Response teams reacting to an incident in the centre of Lochgilphead. Members of the Strategic, Corporate Recovery and Operational teams of the combined response were represented.

1.2 Objectives

The objective of the exercise was to practice the staff response to an incident using their combined Business Continuity and Emergency Planning response. The full aims of the exercise are detailed in section 2.1.

1.3 Summarised Results

- 1.3.1 17 members of staff took part directly in the exercise by attending the incident teams in Kilmory Council Offices. Other members of staff were involved remotely.
- 1.3.2 This was the first time many of the staff had taken part in an exercise and all learned from the experience.
- 1.3.3 This was the first time a joint Business Continuity/Emergency Planning response has been tested.
- 1.3.4 Several specific learning points were identified. These are detailed later in this report. However, those that were commonly identified by the majority of participants were:
 - Administrative support was very useful and aided the decision making process, but needs to be more structured and staffing increased
 - The need for clear and precise communication within the teams is paramount
 - Equally, communications between teams requires to be improved and controlled
 - All incoming information needs to be recorded accurately
 - Although Final plans were not completely issued, this exercise highlighted the need for full BC documentation to be available in the battlebox
 - There was a lack/proper use of equipment, e.g. inadequately equipped rooms.

1.3.5 The Exercise Director addressed the participants after the exercise and commented that they had done well, especially considering the immaturity of the plans. He went on to make the following observations:

- Activity was very uncoordinated at the start of the exercise, but settled down quickly.
- Communications within the Corporate Recovery teams was poor to start with, but after experimentation with physical layouts of the room improved dramatically, with every member being able to make their point and be considered.
- Communications between teams was regular, but not always at the level required – i.e. the Strategic team communicated what it wanted to happen, but then went on to say how it should be done.
- Once in the flow of the incident, decision making was clear, considered and decisive.
- Focus on Business Continuity rather than the cause of the incident was handled well.
- Media was handled well in the circumstances of the exercise.

1.4 Conclusion

The exercise was important as it helped educate those named in the plans as to their roles, and helped raise a number of issues which are difficult to foresee unless you are responding to a specific scenario. In consideration of the exercise aims detailed in Section 2.1 of this document, the Exercise Director considers this exercise to have been very successful with all aims met.

Overall, the incident was managed well. It is the opinion of the Exercise Director that had this been a real incident, it would have been managed successfully.

The effort that has been expended to get the response to this level demonstrates a clear commitment to Business Continuity by Argyll & Bute Council. This is to be commended, along with the clear intention that this positive progress will continue. However, the lack of attendees at the exercise was a cause for concern, and steps must be taken to ensure training is attended by all relevant staff members.

Observations and learning points will be taken on by Argyll & Bute, and incorporated into the BC programme.

Further exercises must now be scheduled, both to ensure lessons learned from Ocean Drive have been included, and to test different parts of the organisation. Whilst Ocean Drive was specifically designed to test the Incident Teams and Plans, areas such as IT Disaster Recovery, Telephony and Departmental Recovery Plans require specific exercising.

2 Exercise Information

2.1 Exercise Aims

1. Fulfil the project requirement to exercise the Corporate Incident Management Plan
2. Fulfil the internal review requirements to exercise the Incident Management Structure
3. Familiarise council staff with the range of plans – particularly the Departmental Recovery Plans.
4. To be able to demonstrate during any audit that the Business Continuity Plans have been exercised
5. Practice decision making
6. Practice combined Business Continuity/Emergency Planning Team dynamics
7. Provide those who would manage an incident confidence and practice in responding to an incident.

2.2 Exercise Timings, Dates and Locations

2.2.1 The exercise took place on 11th March 2009 in the Council Chamber, Argyll & Bute Council, Kilmory between 10:00 and 12:30.

2.3 Exercise Attendees

The following council staff attended Exercise Ocean Drive:

Exercise Facilitators	
Iain Jackson	Governance & Risk Manager
Carol Keeley	Emergency Planning Officer
Strategic Team	
George Harper	Director of Development
Douglas Hendry	Director of Community Services
Andy Law	Director of Operational Services
Sally Reid	Chief Executive
Nigel Stewart	Director of Corporate Services
Corporate Recovery Teams	
Ernie Brown	Training and Health & Safety Manager
Stephen Harper	Social Worker (Community Care)
Karen Henderson	Asst. Public Transport Officer
Laura MacBrayne	Risk Management Assistant
Samantha MacBrayne	Clerical Assistant
Jennifer MacNab	Admin Assistant

Terry Markwick	Central services Manager Operational services Dept
Fiona McCallum	Committee Services Officer
C Repper	Head of Democratic Services and Governance
D Tomlinson	Performance & Support Services Manager
Stewart Turner	Head of Roads & Amenity Services
Alison Younger	Area Corporate Services Manager
External Agencies	
C/Insp K Boyter	Strathclyde Police
Grp Cmdr S McLean	Strathclyde Fire & Rescue
Donald Morrison	Area Service Manager, Scottish Ambulance Service

2.4 Exercise Scenario

The exercise scenario was run in real time. The weather was cloudy & cold in Lochgilphead with snow forecast for early afternoon. The snow is forecast to worsen over the next 24 hours, and turn to rain within 48 hours.

At 10:00 an articulated lorry carrying gas cylinders crashed into the Stag Hotel, Argyll Street, Lochgilphead. The crash caused a fire.

Fire & Rescue attended the scene and very quickly established a cordon due to the gas cylinders being exposed to heat. As there is a direct line of blast running North / South, both the A83 and Manse Brae / Oban Road were closed. This effectively bisects Lochgilphead preventing travel East / West.

The Manse Brae council offices were to be evacuated, along with any other buildings within the cordon.

There was a high profile wedding scheduled at the registry office for mid-day, with guests coming from both Glasgow and the Crinnan area.

2.5 Exercise Concept

Exercise Ocean Drive was a desktop scenario exercise. The exercise was played in real time dealing with the first hours of the incident. The existing Emergency Contact List was used to cascade information that Business Continuity Plans had been invoked. There were also injects from Police, Fire & Rescue and Ambulance Service personnel.

2.6 Exercise Details

The Exercise Manual is treated as confidential in order to allow sections to be re-used, whilst preserving an element of secrecy and surprise. If required it may be accessed on request to Argyll & Bute Council's Business Continuity Manager.

3 Observations, Findings and Action Points

3.1 Exercise "Ocean Drive"

No	Observations/Finding	Action	Priority	Owner
1103-01	Lack of attendees at the exercise	Team members must attend training sessions to ensure correct response during actual incidents	Critical	
1103-02	Admin teams require specific training	Dedicated BC Admin team should be set up and trained. Roles identified for logging, telephones etc.	High	
1103-03	No-one was delegated to brief team members as they entered the room	Specific roles to be identified within teams	High	
1103-04	Call cascade was very time consuming with variable results	Investigate electronic callout method	Medium	
1103-05	Clear communication within and between teams must be maintained	Ensure team chairs allow for structured discussion	Medium	
1103-06	Insufficient BC Incident Log forms were supplied, and the design was not fully understood	Ample supply of customised BC Incident log forms to be placed in Battlebox. Admin teams to be trained in usage. Investigate electronic logging.	Medium	
1103-07	BC/EP Combined structure was not initially successful. Structure worked well after re-organisation.	Review structure and possibly alter. Documentation to be updated to reflect any changes.	Medium	
1103-08	There was a lack/proper use of equipment, e.g. inadequately equipped rooms.	Room setup to be reviewed Appropriate equipment to be ordered and installed and checked to ensure correct working order/equipment is still available	Medium	
1103-09	Few Deputies are indentified leading to gaps in teams	Deputies to be nominated and trained	Medium	

No	Observations/Finding	Action	Priority	Owner
1103-10	Strategic Team inclined to pass on Strategic direction, then give Tactical directions	Teams to be trained to stick to their designated roles	Low	
1103-11	Some tasks were duplicated across teams e.g. Contacting West Coast Motors was performed by both Strategic & Corporate Recovery	Clear direction and division of tasks to be practised	Low	